

## SUB COUNTY TIER STATUS

The current Tier ranking for NC counties does not recognize the economic disparity in several rural counties that have the benefit of pockets of affluence contrasted with poverty and disadvantage in other parts of those counties.

As an example, Moore County has a Median Household Income of \$50,000, Pinehurst's is \$66,000, Southern Pines \$45,000 and Robbins is \$28,000. The poverty rate in Pinehurst is 4%, So. Pines 12% and Robbins 29%.

Moore County is a Tier 3 County and the Average Weekly Wage in Private Industry is \$688. Lee County a Tier 2 its \$727 and in Nash County a Tier 1 it's \$866. Moore County's average weekly wage is \$11 less than Nash a Tier 1 and is 26% lower than NC's Average Weekly Wage.

The numbers are even more dramatic when comparing Average weekly wages in manufacturing alone. Moore is \$759 while Nash is \$1,011. Moore is below the State Average by 40% or \$750 vs. \$1,011. Unfortunately this disparity is not only a rural issue but also true in many Urban Counties as well.

All of this highlights the fact that any effort to differentiate prosperity from disparity cannot be done by simply considering decisions on a county basis. Previously that reality was recognized by the Rural Center and in particular their Building Reuse and Restoration Grant Program. Once reorganized under the newly created Rural Division Tier 3 Counties were eliminated from grant consideration and board representation was open to only Tier 1 and Tier 2 Counties. Only through the use of Census Tract information can a Tier 3 be considered for consideration and the current proposal eliminates that tool.

We know that the goal of your efforts is to increase prosperity for all North Carolinians. However, that goal cannot be achieved through the use of artificial county boundaries. We hope that with your help, a process can be developed that considers all communities in need of stimulus.